

Career Pathways

Promising Practices

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Southwest Corner Workforce Investment Area Community Action Southwest & Intermediate Unit 1

Community Action Southwest (CAS) and Intermediate Unit 1 (IU1) have teamed up to launch a collaborative career pathways program. Some of their achievements and innovative next steps are:

- **Hired a dedicated case manager to assist and support enrolled career pathways students through the program:** CAS received supplemental funding from the PA Department of Community & Economic Development to hire a case manager to focus exclusively on the Career Pathways Program. That case manager is tasked with assisting 20 CAS students in addition to 10 IU1 students to transition through the career pathways program. The case manager spends the majority of his time working with students from both programs in the three PA CareerLinks® in the service area. CAS and the IU1 have coordinated their schedules so that one agency is on-site daily to offer adult education classes.
- **Submitting a grant to hire a dedicated staff member to establish relationships with appropriate local postsecondary education programs and assist and support students in mapping out career pathways that include postsecondary programs:** This initiative comes from CAS' focus on postsecondary opportunities for all learners. Job development has long been a focus for CAS, as has encouraging and supporting students to transition to postsecondary education. CAS has found that simply encouraging students on to greater levels of education is insufficient. The agency has been inspired to solicit support from a local foundation to fund a staff position solely devoted to working with its clients (agency-wide) to proactively facilitate the transition into postsecondary education institutions.
- **Partnered with local education institution to develop and offer targeted *basic skills* classes that support entry to industry specific credentialing classes:** IU1, in conjunction with Western Area Career & Technology Center (WACTC), developed basic academic skills curriculum to prepare students for the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS®). Students successfully passing the TEAS® can transition to nursing programs such as the one offered at WACTC.

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Three Rivers Workforce Investment Area Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3

Office Technology Career Pathways Program

The Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) is in the planning stages of forming a partnership with two important community programs in Braddock, Pennsylvania: Community College of Allegheny County's (CCAC) Modern Office Systems Training program (MOST) and the Braddock Employment and Training Center (BETC). The AIU is working with these programs to develop a multi-faceted program that will create a pathway to office technology for adult education students. The program will be modeled after the I-BEST and will provide students an opportunity to improve the basic skills needed to successfully pass the GED®, while *simultaneously* receiving training in office technology. Currently, the MOST program prepares students with the clerical and office administration skills that are necessary for positions such as office clerks, receptionists, data entry operators, secretaries, administrative assistants, customer service representatives and medical office secretaries.

The AIU currently has a GED® program at the BETC and is working with representatives from the BETC administration, TANF, and MOST to develop an office technology career pathway for adult education students. The TANF's Vocational Counselor and TANF administrators are very interested in this model because it will provide concurrent, sector-focused learning, and students will work with BETC's on-site job developer, which will create a natural transition into job placement.

Students will be referred to the CCAC's MOST program from the TANF vocational counselor or by BETC staff. They will participate in an orientation that will address the policies and expectations for the educational and training components. The learning schedule will be fluid as the instructors from both programs will collaborate on each learner's schedule. Learner's schedules and training will mirror that of the real world – they will use equipment and software used in today's business settings, while building office technology skills in a learner-centered environment.

Another important part of this developing office technology career pathway is the post-secondary transitional component. Successful completers of the program will earn up to ten free college credits and could qualify for college credit classes. This career pathway opportunity will be provided at no charge to the learners.

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Northern Tier Workforce Investment Area Bradford County Action

Planning with Partners

As the Title I and Title II provider in Bradford County, Bradford County Action (BCA) has enjoyed a long history of positive relationships with both community partners and workforce development partners. With this strong foundation, BCA has met little resistance in developing an active career pathways team. Bi-monthly meetings include adult education staff, Community Action partners, PA CareerLink® staff, and workforce development partners with strong connections to business and industry and training providers.

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Action Steps

Team leader Penne Watkins has taken the lead on the development and follow-up for the team's action steps. Team members discuss progress on previous action steps and define objectives and activities that will lead to more fully integrated career pathways programming.

Excerpts from a recent planning meeting follow:

Objective	Tactics	Expected Outcomes	Progress
Identify career sector focus	Discuss and identify populations with common goals/career track	Identify at least one career sector to focus career pathways on	Decided to focus our efforts on gas industry and healthcare related employment. Hospitality/retail related occupations may also be a focus.
Determine curriculum needs based on identified sector focus	Review and discuss existing curriculum and determine need for development of additional curriculum or revision of existing curriculum to meet identified sector needs	Identify curriculum needs and develop a plan for meeting any needs	Reviewed existing gas industry and healthcare related local trainings (primarily CAN, LPN, ShaleNet, welding, CDL) and available remedial and financial assistance (WIA, PDE, WIN, OJT, etc.)

Information provided by Penne Watkins, Bradford County Action.

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Northwest Workforce Investment Area
Greater Erie Community Action Committee

Case Management

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development awarded grants to five Community Action Agencies for the purpose of career pathways partnering with adult education providers. In Erie, the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) not only provides adult education services, but it also is one of the five Community Action Career Pathways grantees. This relationship has allowed for increased interaction among the case managers and the adult education Program at GECAC and is providing for increased collaboration with GECAC and the other adult education providers in Erie.

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In-class Instruction

The GECAC Adult Education Instructors have adapted and integrated lessons from the curriculum, “Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom” within a basic skills context. Instruction in class is focused on *career awareness* through activities that encourage writing, math, and reading to learn about potential choices. Case management’s focus is the *exploration of the careers* identified by the awareness process. Students are then ready to discuss and plans steps toward their aspirations with their case manager. Case managers meet with the student begin a career plan and develop SMART goals.

Community Action Partnership

The Community Action arm of GECAC has developed a full service case management program that is available to support eligible adult education students enrolled in Erie programs. A full time case manager is available to provide support to students to address barriers and referrals to appropriate services to reduce these barriers. Other services for eligible participants include career exploration activities, information about the local labor market and in-demand jobs, and support for employer-recognized certifications. While these services are provided through GECAC, staff is hopeful that all adult education providers in Erie will refer students that will most benefit from these additional supportive services and activities.

Information provided by Barb Kroh , Greater Erie Community Action Committee.

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Three Rivers Workforce Investment Area
Goodwill of Southwestern PA

Medical Career Pathways

Goodwill of Southwestern PA (SWPA) Education Department successfully collaborates with various healthcare employers in the region— Allegheny General Hospital, Mission Vision, and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, among others— to offer a medical career pathways classes. Individuals participate in a six-week program that focuses on topics and skill building activities to enhance their opportunity to attain careers in the region’s high priority healthcare industry.

The curriculum for this program integrates academic and workforce competencies that local healthcare employers agree are important for entry level employees to possess in order to be successful on the job. Built into the curriculum are job shadowing opportunities at one of the local healthcare providers. For example, when students successfully meet the competencies deemed necessary for employment, Allegheny General Hospital offers job shadowing in several fields

including: Patient Transportation, Dietary, Environmental and in areas which support direct patient care.

After students successfully complete the program, they have the opportunity to transition to one of Community College of Allegheny County’s (CCAC) free medical certification programs or they could apply for an entry level position with one of the medical collaborators’ facilities.

In addition, Goodwill of SWPA has Career Exploration pathways for lower level students and students who have not identified a specific career interest. The program also has a referral pathway from their in-house CareerLink® for participants who have a career goal and are looking for a job or training but may not have the foundation skills to attain their goal.

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Three Rivers Workforce Investment Area
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council

An Evolving Partnership

The Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC) and Rivers Casino have established a successful relationship that has evolved into successful employment for many students. Their collaboration started with a request by the Casino for GPLC to assist employees with limited English speaking skills improve their job related English skills. The casino's goals were to help these employees improve communication with guests, staff, and the use of hand held radios; decrease mistakes; develop employee confidence; develop better job performance; and improve moral. These in-house classes were provided using authentic job specific task scenarios and workplace materials. Attendance was not mandatory; enrollment decreased as no incentive or motivation for participation was provided.

Casino Hospitality Class

GPLC staff decided to suggest some adjustments to their partnership. They decided to provide a casino hospitality class at GPLC's downtown center which would focus on casino specific and general vocabulary, hospitality-based conversational skills (e.g., talking with guests), job interviewing skills, resume writing, and applying for jobs online. GPLC wanted to provide students with a pre-employment class that would prepare them for a variety of hospitality jobs. This idea was welcomed by the Rivers Casino staff; they regularly send human resource staff and hiring managers to visit the downtown center to provide informational sessions, conduct pre-screening interviews, and interview students who complete the casino hospitality class. The Casino Hospitality class runs monthly and totals 25 hours of instruction. To date, six students have been hired through this partnership.

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Luzerne-Schuylkill Workforce Investment Area
Luzerne County Community College

Orientation

Staff from Luzerne County Community College has implemented an extended orientation process. Before being enrolled in the career pathways program, students must participate and complete 12 hours of orientation, testing, and case management workshops before they enter the classes. This orientation process is completed over a two-week period and introduces students to the entire program, all of the services available, and what will be expected of them should they choose to continue. The students who participate in the orientation process are then linked together as a cohort and participate in career pathways programming and are encouraged to enroll in other services and workshops available through the local PA CareerLink. This cohort structure has been very successful for them. They have determined that a cohort of individuals going through the program beginning at orientation helps with retention.

Partnerships and Referrals

Throughout the orientation process, the Career Coach from the Commission on Economic Opportunity (COE) is available to work with students to identify and address barriers and to become aware of the services available through their agency. Upon completion of orientation, students are taken to the PA CareerLink by the CEO career coach to discuss their services and register for the interviewing and resume workshops. While at the local PA CareerLink, staff are available to help students determine eligibility of welfare services and to administer the SDS and provide financial aid services. Those who are eligible for CEO services, will receive assistance paying for GED tests. The Career Pathways team decided to focus on Healthcare and Logistics & Transportation as the two Industry Clusters for this project. Students will receive integrated customized instruction within their GED classes within these two areas. The local PA CareerLink site administrator is helping to connect students with local employers through the Business Service Team and working with employers to bring awareness of the LCCC career pathways program in order to gain their support and guidance.

For additional information, please contact:

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Information provided by Kimberly Gavlick, Luzerne County Community College.

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Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Area
ProJeCt of Easton, Inc.

Scheduling

Staff members at ProJeCt of Easton have been developing career pathways programming for all students enrolled in their classes. During the ten-week instructional cycle, each day begins with basic skills instruction in communication skill-building which may include reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Following communication instruction, the second daily module focuses on numeracy-math to solve problems. Each day consists of work readiness components that are guided by both Equipped for the Future and the Foundation Skills Framework, with opportunities for independent study and career awareness. To round out the day, teachers support career pathways with instruction that is sector-based, focusing on healthcare, information technology, early child care, and manufacturing.

Classes meet Monday through Thursday from 9:30 to 1:30.

Friday provides an opportunity for students who have specific career pathways goals to meet with the career pathways case manager for focused support.

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Pathways Days

During each of ProJeCt's ten week managed enrollment cycles, staff members provide an opportunity for students to interact with education and training providers and employers. On these days, representatives from PA CareerLink®, healthcare providers, temporary employment agencies, and postsecondary education and training partners such as Northampton Community College and the Career Institute of Technology answer questions and provide information about employment opportunities and education and training programs.

Information provided by Dr. April Niver, ProJeCt of Easton, Inc.

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Southern Alleghenies Workforce Investment Area
Somerset County Technology Center

ShaleNet

The Somerset County Technology Center (SCTC) has recently been named as a ShaleNet training provider. In order for students to participate in ShaleNet training, each student must meet a basic skill level and earn a WorkKeys certification. SCTC is working with staff from the PA CareerLink® to provide students with basic skill instruction as they prepare to use the WIN courseware and complete the WorkKeys testing.

Occupational Training

The SCTC are providing services at two different PA CareerLink® sites Bedford County and Somerset County. At the PA CareerLink® Bedford County, SCTC is currently providing a course entitled *Is CDL Training Right For You?* This class helps

participants determine basic skills deficiencies and develop a plan to either improve their basic skills or pursue an occupation better suited for their skill level. Students explore at least three careers within the CDL career ladder that would provide a self-sustaining wage and then determine the “pathways” needed to enter employment within those careers. Students identify their own transferrable skills and how those skills are used on different jobs. While researching these occupations, students learn terminology needed for their pathways and evaluate local training providers and/or job listings to create a plan of action. In addition, students learn effective study techniques needed when continuing their training. These study techniques are based on their preferred learning style. These classes meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 3:30 pm at the PA CareerLink® Bedford County. Representatives from local employers and training providers visit the classroom to talk with students and conduct a question and answer session.

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Three Rivers Workforce Investment Area

Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3, Goodwill of Southwestern PA, and the Community College of Allegheny County

Planning with Partners

The Three Rivers Adult Education Coalition has decided to combine their career pathways team planning into their existing coalition work. Individual coalition members have taken leadership roles in bringing various resources to the Coalition as a whole. Each agency is adapting Career Pathways in a way that suits their various agency types, sizes and capacity. As a coalition, they have identified action steps and delegated responsibilities among the group. Representatives from the group have been attending meetings with local partners including the Labor Management Clearinghouse, City and County Earn, Department of Human Services (DHS) and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center's POWRR. These outreach attempts have enabled them to identify action steps to help them move forward.

For additional information, please contact:

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As a group, they are working with employers such as the Rivers Casino. The Rivers Casino will offer monthly information sessions at Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council to all ABLE coalition students interested in working in the Casino. Representatives from the Labor Management Clearinghouse will meet with students at each of the coalition sites one-to-one or in groups no larger than five to interview them for possible paid internships (leading perhaps to union membership) or other on-the-job training opportunities. In addition, the Community College of Allegheny County offers free training opportunities which are shared via the group.

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Westmoreland Fayette Workforce Investment Area Intermediate Unit 1 Private Industry Council of Westmoreland Fayette

Shortly after the Career Pathways Kick-off event in October, 2011, staff from Intermediate Unit 1 and The Private Industry Council of Westmoreland Fayette developed a career pathways mission statement reflecting the role of adult education in the initiative. Staff also worked together to define goals for their adult education career pathways programs.

Mission Statement

To support local workforce development through industry targeted instruction that will increase employability and generate opportunities for personal enrichment.

Westmoreland/Fayette Pathways Goals

1. Meet with key PA CareerLink® staff in collaboration to develop educational services to prepare PA CareerLink® customers to enter employment or retain employment or successfully transition and complete postsecondary education/training programs.
2. Create a program of study for students that develop skill sets required for employment in the targeted career ladders.
3. Establish relationships with employers and educational partners to identify skills valued by targeted industry partners.

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Information, mission statement and goals provided by Angela Kenes, Intermediate Unit 1 and Tami Ozegovich, Private Industry Council of Westmoreland Fayette, Inc.